

News Release

UIS founded New Century Learning Consortium adds U of M Crookston as 10th member

By Itollefs on Friday, January 21, 2011

The New Century Learning Consortium (NCLC), founded at the University of Illinois Springfield has added University of Minnesota, Crookston as its 10th member. The Consortium is designed to assist universities in implementing high quality, large-scale online and blended learning programs.



"We welcome the University of Minnesota, Crookston to NCLC. As one of the fastest growing online programs in Minnesota and possessing a distinguished tradition of national awards and honors, the University of Minnesota, Crookston is a strong partner for the consortium," said Shari McCurdy Smith, NCLC director and associate director of the Center for Online Learning, Research, and Service (COLRS) at UIS.

The U of M, Crookston conferred its first online degree in 2001 and now offers seven of its bachelor's degree programs entirely online.

"The faculty and staff of the University of Minnesota, Crookston are honored to join the NCLC," said Chancellor Charles Casey, "and we eagerly anticipate the exchange of ideas that will result from our interaction with the other members of the NCLC."

The Consortium plans to expand to 14 institutions by May of 2011. Consortium activities include developing a clearinghouse of online classes where there is excess capacity; shared research projects; shared IT expertise to support building infrastructure capacity; and peer support at the upper administration, dean, and faculty member levels. NCLC was founded utilizing a grant from the Sloan Consortium, who is also providing funding for the expansion.

"We are especially gratified to have the University of Minnesota, Crookston join us in NCLC. The Crookston campus - the original 'laptop U' - has a long history of innovation in the application of technology to enhance teaching and learning. They are a leader in online learning in the University of Minnesota system," said Ray Schroeder, director of COLRS and founder of NCLC.

NCLC member institutions are dedicated to developing vigorous online and blended learning initiatives to expand and stabilize student enrollments.

Current members are University of Illinois Springfield; California State University Easy Bay, Hayward; Southern Oregon University, Ashland; Chicago State University, Illinois; Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Michigan; University of Southern Maine, Portland; Louisiana Tech University, Ruston; SUNY Empire State College, Saratoga Springs; and Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia.

For more information about the Consortium, contact Shari McCurdy Smith at 217/206-7360 or email smccu1@uis.edu.

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